

Sunset, Moonrise

by KJS

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Summary: Far in the future, Sarah's daughter faces her mother's impending death, and what happens after.

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Sunset

Sarah laughed. She couldn't believe it, but she did. A laugh that startled awake the young woman that slumbered in the chair
>next to her bed. <p>

"Hmm?" The woman awoke, groggily stretching and turning to Sarah.
"Mom? You okay?"

Sarah nodded, resting a wrinkled, weary hand on the woman's arm.
"Christine... I know it won't be long."

Christine sniffled. "I know, Mom. Since Dad died, we knew it was coming...."

Sarah, smiled. If only her daughter knew...."And I welcome it. David was a good man, I miss him..." but not the one I longed
>for all these years in the back of my mind, she added silently, though I loved him so. "I just regret I won't see you and Erik

have more children, and little Amy grow up. You will give it to her when she's old enough, won't you?" Sarah's voice
>became concerned. <p>

Christine nodded. "Yes... I loved that book, and 'The Labyrinth' will go to her when she's old enough... I just wish I knew why
>you're so attached to it. I mean, it's great and all, but you seem--" <p>

Sarah cut her off. "A long story, my dear one. Perhaps your daughter will someday discover why I loved it." Though I hope
>she never has to go through such a hard course, she thought. "I'd like to sleep for a little while." Out of the corner of her eye,

Sarah saw a shadow. A darkness approaching. "I see it, Christy. They're coming for me."

Christine gasped. "No, Mom! Please!" Her voice wavered, but at Sarah's touch she quieted.

"Now Christine," Sarah knew her daughter would not understand, "I love you and Erik and Amy so dearly.... this world
>means so much. But there's somewhere, I can see it coming." Sarah's blue-hazel eyes still sparkled as they did before her face
was lined with wrinkles, "And I need to go. Soon. I'm so close, I can see it.... my destiny, the place where nothing ever hurts
>again. And your father awaits me.... and there's an old friend, I hope I may see again.... If only you knew what I have seen, my

darling." Sarah sighed, feeling the weight settling on her fragile frame. "And he'll guide me, and David will be there, and I'll

>see the end of the rainbow... Christine." Their eyes met. "Love the world. And never, ever let you or your family give up
dreams, no matter how foolish or strange they seem."

Christine felt the strange chill she got whenever her mother gave her that all-knowing, mysterious smile. "Mom.... I'll love
>them forever... and I hope you find this place." Tears filled her blue eyes. "I really hope you find it. Mom.... you've always

spoken of this person, who is he?"

Sarah again laughed, she felt them come easier as her time drew near. "Oh, that you will find out soon enough. He'll visit you,
>I'm sure. Please, I must rest..." Leaning back, Sarah closed her eyes. A faint memory whispered to her. Towers rising out
from a distance. Furry creatures dancing. A glittering, silver ballroom. A dwarf so familiar.... and a pair of eyes with a
>vortex of emotion, dragging her in..... "Goodbye...." <p>

The shadows surrounded her, closing in on her soul. No where to go. But suddenly, she felt a warm hand touch her, a tingling

>sensation as light surrounded her. "Yes...." Sarah whispered into the nothingness. She felt the years melt away. A pair of eyes

stared into hers. "Jareth?" A nod. And for an instant she was in his embrace, then she was soaring over the Labyrinth on
>>wings of pure translucent dreams. An owl flew beside her.
<p>

Before she knew it, she was in a whirlpool where the past, present, and future were one. Sarah was floating among
>memories, among thoughts. <p>

"My dear...." A voice so regal, so gentle and kind.... she tried to see him, but she had no eyes, no body, and before she knew

>it, she was surrounded by everything at once, magick pumping in her veins, a place beyond everything. "David!" Her voice
that wasn't there called to the presence she knew was near. Finally, Sarah felt she could rest. For an instant she had seen him
>again, had seen the Labyrinth, and now she knew she was home, where nothing ever would hurt again....

****_Moonrise_****

Jareth knew she was dying. Felt it, after all these years, the weakening of a Dreamer's Soul before it was taken to the ultimate

>dream. His special children. He should have known it would be soon, the only girl to solve his Labyrinth had married long
ago, had a child who herself now had a child.... Jareth's gaze flickered to his crystal ball, where he watched a little girl
>sleep. He knew Amy would be like her grandmother and turn up here, though he hoped she would have the same strength. <p>

The image in the crystal wavered, and vanished, changing into one of a woman sleeping by the bedside of an elderly woman,
>whose grey hair still held hints of the rich chestnut brown it had once been. <p>

"Sarah...." Jareth touched the crystal, wishing for the day he could never return to. He had watched her for years, constantly.
>At first he had been angry someone had solved his puzzles, but then merely confused and captivated by this girl. After her
wedding, he had slipped back into attending to his kingdom, but still held a longing in his heart he didn't understand. And
>now, Sarah was dying. <p>

In a flash of light and a spray of glitter, he vanished, and appeared by her bedside, invisible and unnoticed as Sarah slipped
>away. Jareth immediately followed Sarah's soul, trailing it with magick, and sensed something in it. A desire.... to see the

Labyrinth again. "For you, anything." With a whisper, he held the phantasmal essence of her, an embrace he had longed to
>give her. Her voice floated into his mind, and he transported them so they were soaring over the Labyrinth. Never had he felt
such exhilaration in his owl form, speeding along with her soul like a phoenix beside him. Yet Jareth knew she would not
>rise from her ashes. He felt a tug, and knew it was time to part. "My dear...." with a whirlwind of energy, he set her back on
her path.

For a moment, Jareth just hung there, midair, unsure of what to do. A thought came unbidden to his mind. "Her child..."
>Another flash, and he was back at the bedside again, this time there was no occupant. And now he was perfectly visible.
Christine stared at him, wide eyed.

"Who are you? What...?" Christine struggled to speak as she overcame her shock at the strange visitor who smiled
>mysteriously at her. A familiar smile.... <p>

"Jareth. The Goblin King." He inclined his head. "An old friend of your mother's. I heard she spoke of me?"

Christine, frightened by the sudden visitor, backed up towards the

door. "Who...?" Her voice shook, yet in her mind the
>words of her mother echoed clearly. 'He'll visit you, I'm sure...'
<p>

Jareth, unfazed, let his gaze linger on the bed. "She was so
beautiful..." His hand reached out for a moment towards the

>blankets where Sarah had rested earlier, sorrow crossing his face.
<p>

"You knew her...", Christine cautiously approached the stranger.
"How?"

Jareth gave her a half-hearted smirk. "Didn't she ever read you the
book?"

The woman gasped, making the connection. "Impossible!" The book that
her mother had held so dear... it couldn't be real...

Jareth nodded, "I wonder how you define that. Look at the universe,
how can you say anything is impossible?"

Christine shook her head. "No, she would have told me anyway..."

Jareth caught her arm, and lightly placed a finger under her chin,
forcing her to look at him. "She didn't want you to have to go

>through what she did. Sarah knew it would be best not to mention
it." Looking away, Jareth shifted his gaze to the window
and the
setting sun. "But even she didn't really know what the experience
was. What the Labyrinth is."

Christine desperately tried to accept all that this mysterious king
was telling her. All along, she had thought her mother's
>fondness of the book had just been from her love of it as a child,
and that this 'old friend' had perhaps been a college

acquaintance, but not a ruler of another realm.... her mother had
her entire perspective changed, a life altering experience, and

>Christine had never had an inkling of an idea of it. <p>

"I can take you there."

"What?" Christine snapped out of her musings.
>
"To the Labyrinth. Want to go on a trip?" The Goblin King
smiled, using his charm.

Christine hesitated. Sure, she should just turn around and run home,
but she couldn't help but wonder of this magickal land her
>mother spoke of. "Um..... yes." <p>

Jareth's grin widened. "Fine then." With a flick of his wrist, a
crystal leapt from his hand into the air, spinning, and as it

>landed in his hand again, Christine felt her breathe taken away. She
was no longer at her mother's bedside, but in front of a
towering
wall, the sweet scent of peaches in the air.

"I have thirteen hours to show you my Labyrinth..." Jareth gazed

fondly at the walls, yet his eyes held a faraway look.

"Then will you return me?" Christine was nervous. She wanted to trust him, yet longed for the familiar comfort of her husband and daughter. <p>

Jareth's gaze shifted to her. "Of course.... as long as..."

"Yes?" Christine was nervous. She hadn't suspected conditions with her safety. She felt a little fear rising within her mind.

"Read to your daughter from the book," he said simply, "Tell her stories of this beautiful place. Tell her of her grandmother."

Relief washed over Christine. "Okay," she let out the breath she had been holding. But then, a thought occurred to her. "You took Mom, are you ever going to take Amy?" Anger replaced the relief, an overpowering need to protect her daughter. <p>

Jareth placed a reassuring hand on her shoulder. "Don't worry about her, she has Sarah's spirit. If she ever finds herself in my

>realm, I know she will be fine. Even I cannot see the future," Jareth's eyes regained the faraway look, "But she may end up here, I do not know. I sense a dreamer within her, so much like her grandmother... If she does, she will be fine. If you read her the Labyrinth to her." He smiled innocently. <p>

Christine sighed. "All I can ask for, I suppose. Then.... shall we be going?"

Jareth nodded, and the gates of the Labyrinth opened. Christine knew her mother may never have told her about this land, and may never have the chance to, but it didn't matter now. She felt her mother's spirit around her, and recalled those words read so long ago from the beat-up old book. These 13 hours would show her a world she had let slip into the back of her mind as non-existent fairy land. Now, she would see it, see what her mother loved. <p>

~~*~*~*~*

>Just as the sun sets with its golden rays so that the silvery moon can arise, Sarah's line passed down the book and the tales of a mysterious king with many sides to his personality, a magickal land, and the undying love of dreams and the imagination. >Occasionally trips were made, but in the end, all got a glimpse. <p>

The Labyrinth hears the hearts of all who dream.

End
file.